

## SHU's Ryan-Matura Library Newsletter

Spring 2006, Issue 2.1

## Word from the stacks...

## In praise of books: The strengths of old-tech

By Bonnie Figgatt

**"He who destroys a good book kills reason itself."****- John Milton**

Last summer, a major university rearranged the space in its undergraduate library. Article headlines about the move suggested that the University of Texas at Austin was going bookless. "College Libraries Set Aside Books in a Digital Age" declared the front page of the May 14, 2005 *New York Times*. "Packing Up the Books" was the July 1, 2005 *Chronicle of Higher Education's*



headline. Of course, anyone reading a few sentences into either article quickly discovered that the undergraduate library wasn't getting rid of its books at all – just moving them to other libraries on campus, to make space for access to digital information.

Curiously, however, the idea that universities are getting rid of their books has taken hold. Referring to the Texas move, a member of our campus community recently asked whether all the books would soon be gone from our shelves, too. Can we really be convinced by a few headlines that a major university is getting rid of its books? Something in the air is

telling us books are becoming obsolete. But we accept this notion only at our peril. Is it only in a country where we take access to books so much for granted that we can calmly contemplate such a possibility, and even consider it progress? What are we thinking? Certainly, any university that would allow its library to eliminate books just because they are printed rather than electronic has surely lost track of its purpose.

Plans to digitize millions of books from world-class libraries have enjoyed great attention and notoriety. It's a very exciting idea – but certainly no basis for considering printed

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## Ryan-Matura rolls out new course

By Libby Knappik

This past Fall semester the library was proud to introduce a new course on campus, Information Literacy or IL101. Ten sections of this one credit, 8 week long class were taught in the library to over 125 students. All of the librarians, as well as three

adjunct instructors, participated in the new program.

The first week of class started out with a bang, literally! Students were given a tour of the library which coincided with their first information exercise. The exercise involved analyzing the scene of an accident (special thanks

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**More FREE MONEY!!!**

See page 12 for details.  
Get yours while it lasts!

# Learning Space?

## What's a learning space?

In the last issue of this newsletter, I began my column with the following three paragraphs. Somehow it seems appropriate to begin this one with the same introduction.

"It's not the kind of thing that jumps out at you when you come into the Library, but it's there . . . the Suggestion Box. In fact, it is so well hidden that one might suspect that we don't want any suggestions. First, it's a residential mailbox, the kind you'd find on someone's porch. It's definitely smaller than a bread box, and hardly recognizable as a suggestion box. Second, it's tucked away, hanging on one of the posts in the Library's main floor reading room, near the display of faculty publications.

It's not that we don't welcome your suggestions. It's a remnant of another library administration. I wander by it every once and a while and check to see if a piece of paper has been placed inside. I always read whatever is there."

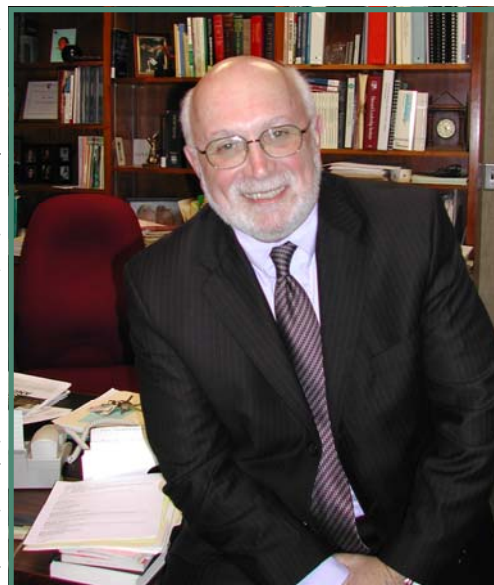
A recent contribution to the suggestion box made the following comment: "Regulate the noise!"

It's a reasonable-enough request. But allow me to quote myself again with the follow-

ing question from the previous article. "When is a library not a library, at least not in the traditional sense of the term?" I answered that question by saying that "a library is not a library in the traditional sense when it is more than a storehouse for print . . ."

In the same way that our concept of "library" is changing from the traditional concept—library as storehouse for print, it is also changing from another traditional concept—library as a uniformly quiet place of study, research and contemplation. As universities' change the way education is delivered to include not only the traditional characteristics of textbooks, professorial lectures, note-taking and research papers, but also group projects, PowerPoint presentations and other traits of active engaged learning, the purpose to which library space is put is evolving as well. The new concept is "library as learning space," a place where groups can get together to discuss projects, where those PowerPoint presentations can be developed and rehearsed and where active engaged learning can mean people talking to other people.

This doesn't mean that there is no place, nor that there will be no place where one can find quiet space in the library. It does mean that the library may no longer be exclusively quiet space. Thus Ryan-Matura Library users who need to interact can do so on the main floor, and that users who are looking for quiet space will find it on the upper level. And we take steps on the upper level to regulate the noise.



**Mr. Dennis C. Benamati**  
University Librarian

## Spring Hours & Numbers

**Monday - Thursday** 8:00 AM - Midnight  
**Friday** 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM  
**Saturday** 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
**Sunday** 12:30 PM - Midnight

### Spring Break

Sun, March 5: 12:30 PM - 8:00 PM  
Mon, March 6 - Thurs March 9: 8AM-11PM  
Fri, March 10: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM  
Sat, March 11: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
Sun, March 12: 12:30 PM - 11:00 PM

### Easter Holiday

Wed, April 12: 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM  
Thurs, April 13 - Mon, April 17: CLOSED  
Tue, April 18: 8:00 AM - Midnight

### For more information, please call:

Reference desk: x7702 (203-371-7726)  
Circulation desk: x7726 (203-371-7702)

*Dennis C. Benamati*  
University Librarian

# A faculty/student take on libraries

## Faculty editorial

I am a bookworm. This is not merely a label my grade-school classmates gave, but a badge of honor and a mark of my identity. At least five books are always waiting for me... one in the bathroom, one on the easy chair in the family room, one resting on the reading stand on the kitchen table, and a few on

the night table ready for some late night unwinding. Lest you think these are all professional tomes, let me set your mind at ease. I read a good deal of medical literature, but these are best-sellers or science fiction/fantasy, History - American, Jewish, women's, music - and, yes... trashy romance novels. Although some people predict that the era of the book is end-



This Issue's Topic:

### Faculty/Student Editorial!

One student and one faculty member write briefly on the topic of libraries.

ing in favor of the computer, I just can't imagine curling up in bed for a good read on my laptop. Could an overheating plastic box - albeit a box granting access to worlds of information - ever replace the pleasure of holding a leather- or cloth-

bound volume in my hand? I revel in the sensation of turning the leaves

and admire the crisp print set for eternity on a white page. Don't get me wrong; an anachronist I am not. My proficiency with online research databases is a matter of pride. I am a vocal advocate for the continued development of our library's technology to foster access to these modern-day *Encyclopedia Galacticas* (I did say sci-fi, did I not?). Yet, some of my greatest joys in

University libraries have come from casually browsing the current journals from the comfort of an armchair, and from exploring the stacks in search of hidden and forgotten treasures. An all-electronic library? Not for me. I say keep the books!

- Beverly Fein, Assoc. Professor

## Student editorial

The library is very important for any student at any university. There are a number of sources in circulation and within the databases that offer any student of any major an abundance of credible sources no matter what the subject being researched is. Without the library there would not be enough evidence for research available. It is important to further educate the student out of the classroom and it is because of the library that this happens.

- Joseph Dellaposta

# Ryan-Matura rolls out new course

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to the Nursing Department for the body!), gathering information, and then using that information to try to conclude what caused the accident. These are just some of the basic underlying principles of information literacy.

The course is designed to teach students how to perform quality research using library resources in the most efficient manner possible while achieving superior results. Some of what students will learn includes recognizing the need for information, how to choose and focus their research topic, how to use the electronic resources offered by the library to find the best information (\* please note that the library sub-

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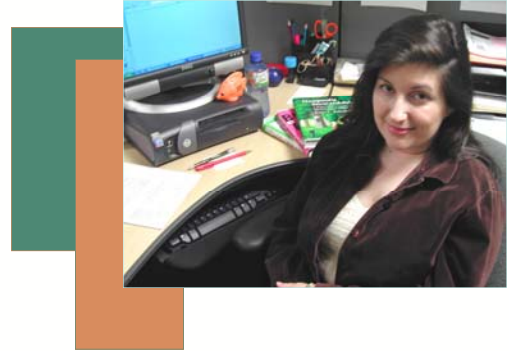


"Patricia" takes a fall during one of the Ryan-Matura Library's new Information Literacy courses. Students analyze different scenes to assess what likely occurred.



# Book Notes

By Lylah Franco



## Literary Extravaganza!

As part of our ongoing efforts to improve Ryan-Matura Library's collections, we have purchased a number of modern literary classics over the past couple of months. Many are winners of the Pulitzer Prize or National Book Award. Some are well-known, such as Erskine Caldwell's *Tobacco Road*. Others are not as well known, like *Pale Fire* by Vladimir Nabokov. A number of them are known mostly for their popular film versions, for example, James Dickey's *Deliverance* and William Styron's *Sophie's Choice*. All of them are unique gems, and I hope you'll have a chance to enjoy them as much as I have.

## The Sheltering Sky by Paul Bowles

I first became aware of Paul Bowles' great novel *The Sheltering Sky* when I saw the 1990 film version (directed by Bernardo Bertolucci and starring Debra Winger and John Malkovich) in college. Intrigued by the movie, I read the book soon after and was puzzled by why, as an English major, I had never heard of this novel or its author. Paul Bowles is, in my opinion at least, one of the great modern American writers, as well as being a quintessential Renaissance man. Bowles began his career as a composer, studying music with Aaron Cop-

land. As well as novels he wrote short stories, poetry and travel journalism. He spent the greater part of his adult life living in Tangier, Morocco, and worked as a translator there. A friend of the "Beat Generation," but not truly a member, he never became as famous as Jack Kerouac or William Burroughs, although his writing has an emotional depth and far-reaching perspective that theirs lacks.

Often described as a keen observation of the West's failure to comprehend the East, *The Sheltering Sky* follows the young American couple Port and Kit Moresby as they travel through North Africa shortly after World War II. Port and Kit, artistic bohemians, see themselves as "travelers" not "tourists" and try determinedly to stray from the beaten path. Disenchanted with "mechanized" Western culture, they harbor romantic ideas about the "primitive" East. However, Port and Kit are unable to foresee the impact of their experimentation on their relationship and lives, and by the end of the novel both have been irreparably damaged.

Although the greater implications of West meets East are both interesting and timely, what drew me into the novel as a college student was the inner life of the character Port. Throughout the novel, Port is on the threshold of gaining real knowledge from his adventures in Africa, yet he continues to run away from his reve-

lations. Early in his travels, he meets an elderly North African woman who says to him (in Spanish) "Life is pain," and immediately wonders "if any American can truthfully accept a definition of life which makes it synonymous with suffering." Port and his wife determinedly pursue new experiences and pleasures, running from both the mundane and the painful, until eventually this path leads them to death and madness. Their youth and their culture have not taught them to keep the inevitability of death and the preciousness of life in mind. As Port says to Kit in one of my favorite passages in all of American literature:

"Death is always on the way, but the fact that you don't know when it will arrive seems to take away from the finiteness of life. It's that terrible precision that we hate so much. But because we don't know, we get to think of life as an inexhaustible well. Yet everything happens only a certain number of times, and a very small number, really...How many more times will you watch the full moon rise? Perhaps twenty. And yet it all seems limitless."

*Lylah Franco is Acquisitions Assistant at Ryan-Matura Library. She earned a BA in English from Southern Connecticut State University in 1998 and is a graduate student in Finance at SHU.*

# A journey beyond the bus:

## More Reading at Ryan-Matura Library:

### More Modern Classics

The Alexandria Quartet by Lawrence Durrell

The Day of the Locust by Nathanael West

From Here to Eternity by James Jones

Go Tell It On the Mountain by James Baldwin

The Optimist's Daughter by Eudora Welty

Tender is the Night by F. Scott Fitzgerald

### Recent Award Winners

The Known World by Edward P. Jones (Pulitzer Prize 2004)

Middlesex by Jeffrey Eugenides (Pulitzer Prize 2003)

War Trash by Ha Jin (PEN/Faulkner Award 2005)

Bel Canto by Ann Patchett (PEN/Faulkner Award 2002)

Life of Pi by Yann Martel (Booker Prize 2002)

Vernon God Little by DBC Pierre (Booker Prize 2003)

### You Saw the Film, Now Read the Book!

All the Pretty Horses by Cormac McCarthy

The Bonfire of the Vanities by Tom Wolfe

The Hours by Michael Cunningham

The Human Stain by Philip Roth

The Magnificent Ambersons by Booth Tarkington

The Remains of the Day by Kazuo Ishiguro

By Dr. June-Ann Greeley

Born in Alabama on February 4, 1913, to James McCauley, a carpenter and stonemason, and Leona Edwards, a teacher, Rosa Louise McCauley had the advantage of beginning her life in the city of Tuskegee, a center of African-American intellectual life since the late 1800's and a place of calm amid the storms of racial strife in the south. The writings of two of Tuskegee's other famous citizens, George Washington Carver and Booker T. Washington, were always important fixtures in the McCauley household, and later in life, Rosa Parks always insisted that she had formed the core of her value system partly according to the teachings her faith, African Methodist Episcopal, and partly according to the inspiration of the lives and achievements of Drs. Washington and Carver, who advised the benefits of hard work, determination, pride of ancestry, integrity, and thrift in personal habits. Sadly, economic woes compelled the McCauley family to leave Tuskegee when Rosa was still young and move around Alabama until Rosa, her brother and mother, settled for while on a farm in Pine Level, Alabama, with Rosa's maternal grandparents.

James McCauley became something of an itinerant worker throughout the South. There in Pine Level, unfortunately, Rosa experienced first-hand the hor-



Rosa Parks (above right), known to many as the mother of the civil rights movement, sparked the Montgomery bus boycott by refusing to yield her seat to a white man after the white section reached capacity

rors of American racism as the KKK often made their presence known to the African-American community, and white planters/ plantation owners hired African-American children to chop cotton for fifty cents a day, encouraging them to work "from can to can't." Such regrettable occurrences did not aggravate Rosa Louise McCauley, however: she always said that the strength of her Christian faith made her feel sorry for the white racists, and that her grandfather had raised her never to feel ashamed of herself, never to accept injury from any person, and never allow herself to be treated with anything less than full respect.

Rosa and her family eventually settled in Montgomery, Alabama, where Rosa attended the

- Continued on next page -

quite progressive Montgomery Industrial School for Girls, a middle and high school founded in 1865 by a (Caucasian) teacher, Alice L. White, from Melrose, Massachusetts. The school was housed on Centennial Hill, the bustling center of African-American life in Montgomery and was chartered exclusively for African-American girls. The school had long been a problem for the local citizens who resented the “northern abolitionists,” as Miss White and her faculty were called, and their intent to educate the girls from the local African-American community, and so the school, and Miss White herself, became regular targets for the local KKK, until the school was forced to close when Rosa was fifteen. Miss White, however, and her school would remain vibrant images in the memory of Rosa Louise McCauley Parks, images of the possibilities of racial harmony and of advocacy for civil rights of all Americans. Montgomery, although a vigorous urban center of business and trade, was still bedeviled by institutional racism, notably Jim Crow legislation, which as early as 1875 had regulated the activities of the African-American community. Blacks were to be separated from whites on all public transportation, in schools, hospitals, hotels, restaurants, theaters, and drinking fountains. Whites could enter buses and trolley cars from the front but blacks had to enter at the back, and the public buses that ran from Tuskegee to Mont-

gomery  
did not  
allow  
blacks to  
sit inside  
the vehicles  
at all: African-American

cans were to sit on the roofs of the buses with the luggage, regardless of the weather condi-

tions. Rosa McCauley endured such insufferable prejudice on a daily basis, for, after the closing of Miss White’s school, she spent the next few years finishing school up to her junior year, but then had to leave school to care for her ill grandmother and mother and support them by cleaning the homes of Montgomery’s wealthy white citizenry, taking in sewing, and selling fruit on the streets of Montgomery. She never complained or lamented her fate, developing a stoic and reserved disposition that would be characteristic of her throughout her life. Yet, one day on her way to work, when she was about eighteen, she happened to pass by O.L. Campbell’s Barber-shop in downtown Montgomery, and caught the eye of one of the barbers, Raymond Parks, who was twenty-eight years old at the time. Raymond had also been born in Alabama but had spent years traveling and working, and reading everything he could find, especially political writings and African-American literature. He was quite political and became a charter member of the Montgomery chapter of the NAACP when he first arrived there, as well as an active member of the National Committee to Defend the Scottsboro Boys. Raymond asked Rosa out for a first date, and on their second date, he asked Rosa to marry him. They were wed in Pine Level, in December, 1932.

Raymond Parks helped his wife Rosa realize her full potential. His first intent was to have her complete her education, as

*“Her bus driver, one James F. Blake, in 1943 had thrown Mrs. Parks off the same bus... for her audacious attempt to board his bus by the front door”*

he felt she deserved, and so Rosa McCauley Parks was able to complete her high school degree

in 1933. At that time, jobs were scarce enough in Montgomery because of the Great Depression; jobs were even more scarce, and traditionally so, for willing workers in the African-American community. Rosa worked as she was able to secure employment, several jobs thereafter, including work as a seamstress, a nurse’s assistant, and as an office worker at Maxwell Field Air Force Base. There, Rosa had her first compelling indication of a better America: because President Franklin Roosevelt had forbidden segregation at US military bases, Rosa was able to socialize openly with white co-workers and ride along with them in public conveyances. As long as she was on base, she was able to enjoy fully her civil liberties. Rosa herself once said that her experience with integration at Maxwell Field persuaded her to join the NAACP in 1943 since she realized that there were alternatives to the horrors of Jim Crow and southern racism, and she wanted to work to make those alternatives possible for all African-Americans.

Once she became a member of the NAACP, Rosa Parks became more active in defying the racial conventions of Montgomery and the injustices wrought upon African-American by Jim Crow legislation. Her inability to vote in 1940 for FDR— or rather, Alabama’s ease at refusing her voter registration based on the state’s declaration that she had failed her literacy test! -- rankled her so much that she became committed to insuring the right of every African-American in Montgomery who so desired the free and unimpeded access to vote. She worked for the Alabama Voters’ League, founded in 1943 by E.D. Nixon, a vigorous civil rights activist in Montgomery, and in 1945, her persistence was vindicated: she went to the City Hall in Montgomery to register to vote, and this time she did indeed receive



notification that her voter registration was valid —yet she still had to pay a “poll tax” of \$16.50 for the “right” to vote! Her first vote was cast for James “Big Jim” Folsom, a populist from southeast Alabama, who supported the rights of women and people of color, and who regularly denounced the KKK and acts of white bigotry.

Yet it would be another decade before Rosa Parks witnessed the most positive resolution to her valiant work as a civil rights’ activist. She worked tirelessly on behalf of African-American youth, in particular: in 1949, she became the advisor to the NAACP Youth group that eventually became the NAACP Youth Council in 1953. In her capacity as advisor, she struggled to desegregate the main library in Montgomery and to afford the black youth of Montgomery with as many educational and cultural opportunities as was possible. A devout Christian her entire life, she was an active member of the congregation at St. Paul AME Church on Hardaway Street in Montgomery, and she helped secure

financial support to rebuild the church finally, long after the original wooden structure had burned down (or was burned down) in 1933. For Rosa Parks, the church was as fundamental to her civil rights activism as was any other community organization, for she always insisted that her Christian faith was the bedrock upon which she relied during her most difficult times. During that decade of resolute yet unassuming activism, Rosa

Parks also made the acquaintance of many later famous civil rights workers and leaders, including the tireless civil rights worker from South Carolina and student of W.E. B. DuBois, Septima Clark, and a mesmerizing young Baptist preacher named Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

When Rosa Parks boarded the bus on the late afternoon on December 1, 1955, she had spent a long day working at her



job in the basement tailor shop of the Montgomery Fair Department Store and had even begun a little holiday shopping. It had been an exceptionally excruciating late summer and fall for Rosa Parks and the whole of the African-American community, especially in the South, as she and they were forced to live through the horror of the brutal murder of fourteen-year-old Emmett Till. Emmett had been visiting his uncle in Mississippi during his

summer vacation from school, but because he was from Chicago, had little awareness of the social expectations of blacks, especially black men, in the Deep South. One day in August, he made the fatal mistake of speaking to a white woman as she left a country store, and later that day, Emmett was abducted and lynched by two local white men, the woman’s husband and his brother-in-law. Emmett’s corpse

was discovered in the Tallahatchie River a few days later, and so brutalized was the body that his mother in Chicago demanded an open casket funeral for her son so that everyone could bear witness to the violent ugliness of racism in the United States. Photographs were published in both national and international newspapers, and shocked activists and people of good will into disbelief and outrage. When in September, 1955, an all-white jury in Sumner, Mississippi found the two defendants “not guilty” after only an hour’s deliberation and despite the testimony of eyewitnesses placing the two men at the

scene of the crime, activists like Rosa Parks understood that some sort of action had to be taken.

There has been some discussion in recent years about the famous “seating” incident on December 1, 1955: did Rosa Parks deliberately decide, or was ordered by committee members of the NAACP, to refuse to give up her seat to a white man on the Court Square bus, or was the entire event

spontaneous, unplanned, a simple twist of fate? Most scholars, and Rosa Parks herself, suggest that what transpired that afternoon was a matter of both deliberation and sudden inspiration, but in any case, necessary at that point in the struggle for civil liberty.

Rosa Parks had toiled steadily all day in the tailor shop and was still feeling overwhelmed by the despair she felt about the Emmett Till case. Yet, she was also in the final stages of organizing a workshop on civil rights to be held at Alabama State University on December 3, but was also a little distracted by her concern for her mother's failing health. When she boarded the Court Square bus she automatically went to the middle section, deemed "racially neutral," to sit, noting that there were several empty seats in the "Whites Only" section. However, she did take note of her bus driver, one James F. Blake who, in 1943, had thrown Mrs. Parks off the same bus and nearly arrested for her audacious attempt to board his bus by the front door. So humiliated and angered had she been by his actions that Rosa Parks made it a point never again to ride a bus that Blake was driving—until that day in December when her distracted thoughts caught her off guard. When Blake saw Mrs.

Parks, he snarled at her and three other African Americans to move

out of the middle section since he wanted to reserve them for white passengers. Three of the four moved to the back of the bus: Rosa Parks did not. She suddenly realized, half-unconsciously, that this was

the moment she had been expecting, that this was the moment of action. Blake stared at her and snarled and demanded that she move, but Mrs. Parks just said, "No." Blake threatened to have her arrested, and Mrs. Parks, serene and sure of her decisions, simply answered, "You may do that." Rosa Parks was indeed arrested, booked by Montgomery police, and spent the next several hours in jail before being released on bond posted by her husband and Clifford Durr, a white lawyer sympathetic to the civil rights movement.

The arrest of Mrs. Rosa Parks, while really only one among other similar incidents, was, however, the spark that began the dynamic escalation

of civil rights activism and the dynamic rise to prominence of civil rights'

activists, like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Rev. Ralph Abernathy, and Mrs. Rosa Parks, herself. Within twenty-four hours of Mrs. Parks' arrest, the Women's Political Council, led by Jo Ann Robinson, a profes-

sor at Alabama State University, called for a bus boycott by all African-Americans for December 5, the day Mrs. Parks was to stand trial. She had already lost her job, and on December 5, Rosa Parks was tried and convicted for breaking a 1945 state law that allowed bus drivers to enforce segregation laws. She was fined \$14.00

and was allowed to return home, but she and others went instead to a rally at Holt Street Baptist Church to support her, the cause of civil liberty, and to celebrate the extraordinary response that day to the bus boycott as not one African-American made use of public transportation.

Yet the bus boycott did not end on that day: it continued, in fact, for thirteen months until the Supreme Court of the United States overturned the segregation law for public conveyances, established by the Montgomery City Commission. The year of the boycott, led and sustained by Rosa Parks, Dr. King, and other civil rights leaders, was a year of elation—at the renewed community spirit; at the courageous demonstration of black pride and self-respect, and at the unexpected emergence of strong, passionate community leaders who had begun to speak to the country, and not just to the state of Alabama or the city of Montgomery—yet one also of forbearance and fortitude, as



*"In an honor never granted to any American woman before, her body lay in state in the Capitol Rotunda"*



both Rosa and her husband, and many other activists, lost their jobs; churches and homes, including that of Dr. King, were bombed; death threats against Mrs. Parks, Dr. King, and other prominent leaders were made regularly by telephone and by mail; several African-American women reported assaults and rapes as they walked along public streets during the boycott, and long friendships and alliances were sorely tried and strained. Still, in the end, the Montgomery Bus Boycott was a victory not only for civil liberty, but also for the tactics of nonviolent resistance and peaceful protest: in the face of overwhelming hostility, even to the point of brutality at the hands of white bigots, the African-American community in Montgomery remained committed, steadfast, faithful, and peaceful, and finally secured justice.

Rosa Parks and her husband did not remain long in Montgomery, however. The death threats against her were incessant, even after the Supreme Court decision; she and Raymond could not secure full-time jobs as the white business owners in Montgomery determined that they were “troublemakers,” and perhaps, most sadly for Mrs. Parks, she was now compelled to battle another “-ism,” sexism, within her own community. Although they had been willing to provide her with the spotlight in the early stages of civil rights activism when the expectations were not as secure, the local male leaders and Baptist ministers suddenly became quite censorious of her popularity and prominence after the boycott. They claimed that she had been “made” the star by the media because she was a “lovely but stupid woman,” and that she was little more than a simple seamstress who

had been unexpectedly caught up in events. Rejection by the very people with whom she had braved death threats was more than Rosa Parks could withstand, and so, in 1957, she, her husband and her mother moved to Detroit, Michigan, to join her brother Sylvester, his wife and their thirteen children, and assorted cousins and other family members. Life was difficult with little money, no real home of their own, and no real understanding of northern culture; nonetheless, the Parks thrived as they continued to teach and speak on matters relating to civil liberties, and Rosa remained in close contact with Dr. King, encouraging him to address the inequities the **women** of their community had to endure from the men themselves, in conjunction with the institutionalized racism of American culture. In 1964, Rosa volunteered to work on the campaign of a Democratic candidate for Congress, John Conyers, an attorney whose campaign slogan was “Jobs, Justice, Peace.” Her friendship with Dr. King brought the civil rights leader to Detroit to meet (and then endorse) John Conyers, who went on to win the election, which he always insisted was due in no small part to the efforts of Rosa Parks and the endorsement of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who had met John Conyers only because Rosa Parks had requested he do so. Rosa Parks then went to work for Rep. Conyers in his Detroit office in 1965, and remained there until her retirement in 1988, at the age of seventy-five. In 1996, President Bill Clinton presented Rosa Parks with the Presidential Medal of Freedom; in 1999, she was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal.

Rosa Parks died on October 24, 2005, after some years of declining health. In an honor never granted to any American woman before, her body lay in state in the Capitol Rotunda, a site usually reserved for American Presidents. She was honored as the person who **began** the modern civil rights movement with her simple refusal to validate insidious laws of segregation. For Rosa Parks, “by any means possible” could only be peaceful means, and, in the end, her quiet courage and faithful persistence altered the course of the lives of African-Americans in ways more significant and lasting than has ever until recently been acknowledged.

*How she sat there,  
the time right inside a place  
so wrong it was ready.*

*The trim name with  
its dream on a bench  
to rest on. Her sensible coat.*

*Doing nothing was the doing:  
the clean flame of her gaze  
carved by a camera flash.*

*How she stood up  
when they bent down to retrieve  
her purse. That courtesy.  
- Rosa, by Rita Dove*

*Dr. June-Ann Greeley teaches as an Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at SHU, where her focus of study is women's studies and western spiritual traditions, among other topics. Around campus, Dr. Greeley proudly represents her native Boston as an avid Red Sox fan.*

The following sources were consulted in the creation of this article:

Douglas Brinkley, *Rosa Parks: A Life*, Penguin, p. 31.  
Brinkley, *ibid*, p. 107.  
*Ibid*, p. 176-177.

# In praise of books: The strengths of an old-tech approach

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books to be obsolete. Would those millions of books Google is digitizing still be accessible if Google went out of business? Dr. Siva Vaidhyathan, an assistant professor of culture and communication at New York University, is concerned that the university libraries involved in Google's digitization project are ceding too much responsibility to a business. "Companies change and fail," he wrote in the December 2, 2005 issue of the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. "Libraries and universities last. Should we entrust our heritage and collective knowledge to a business that has been around for less time than Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston were together?"

Certainly, electronic resources can be rich and magnificent things. The move in universities and research institutions to digitize their unique materials and collections increasingly allows



scholars anywhere to discover and view digitized images of documents and artifacts of all sorts. Further, digital access to

scholarly journals makes it possible for our students and faculty to search and find articles in thousands of publications, more than we could ever subscribe to in print. And, to be sure, electronic access is also nice for students who prefer sitting in the dorm in their jammies doing research, rather than walking across the campus to the library.

When students do come into the library building, they use electronic resources here, too. However, they also discover something else. Students are often surprised, and quite pleased, to find several actual printed **books** (yes!) that are just what they needed.

As Fred D. White, an associate professor of English at Santa Clara University, writes in the September 30, 2005 issue of the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, "To scan parts of a book on a computer screen...leaves young people with the impression that physical books are obsolete...."

*"Should we entrust our heritage and collective knowledge to a business that has been around for less time than Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston were together?"*

*- Dr. Siva Vaidhyathan*

And he urges, "We must find a way to make physical books precious to young people

once again."

Web-based material often lends itself to a kind of reading that pursues link after link, moving broadly among web pages and documents. Reading a book can be a more focused and sustained encounter with another person's mind. Pulling bits of information together as we scan news sites or pursue links is one thing; reading a book that is one person's sustained view of, say, a presidential candidate or the history of Iraq, opens another dimension, and gives us a context for all those bits of information. And after reading one book on globalization or the Supreme Court, it helps to read another one with a different perspective. One book on a subject won't ever be enough, but each one read can add to the richness of our understanding or empathy, and our ability to deal with all the bits and pieces of the broader view. We need the broad reach, but we also need the deep encounter.

Let us not become people who lose sight of the preciousness of books, and who cease to read them and to think about the ideas they express. If that happens, it will not matter what is or is not in our university libraries, because our universities themselves will have no reason to exist.

*Bonnie Figgatt is the University Library's Head of Technical Services, and liaison to the College of Business. She holds a BA from Trinity College, an MLS from Simmons, and an MA from WCSU, where she taught English Composition.*

# New face around the library

Samuel Eddington has joined the staff of the Ryan-Matura Library as Evening Circulation Supervisor. Sam graduated *summa cum laude* from the University of Houston in 2003 with a B.A. in English. He is currently enrolled in the Library Science program at Southern Connecticut State University and plans to graduate in December 2006.

Sam has an interesting work history that includes teaching piano and employment in the University of Houston Writing Center in various capacities.

During the regular sessions, Sam's hours will be from 4:15 pm to 12:15 am Sunday through Thursday. He will be responsible for circulation operations in the evening as well as stack maintenance.

Please welcome him to the University.



Samuel Eddington, Evening Circulation Supervisor

## Fall '05 Correction

In the Fall, 2005 edition of "Word from the Stacks" some conflicting information was published regarding those involved in the lead story, "Librarians: Fighting the Tyranny of Info Overload."

Susan Dowdell does not work in the Seymour Public Library, as published in the second paragraph. Instead, Susan Dowdell works in the Seymour Public Schools, as noted at the end of the article. Also, a finance "board member" was mentioned in the story. Susan Dowdell later clarified: "The Board of Finance member was in the town where I live and had volunteered on the library board (Beacon Falls)."



SHU's Ryan-Matura Library Newsletter

Spring 2006, Issue 2.1

## Word from the Stacks...

Editor: Matilde Renata Cioffi

Design & Layout: Mark Stanczak

Committee Members:

Lylah Franco,  
Kim Macomber  
& Amy Mackie

## Editorial Policy

### Submission of articles or opinion letters:

All submissions of articles or opinion letters must be sent to the editor via e-mail at [ciof-fim@sacredheart.edu](mailto:ciof-fim@sacredheart.edu) for publishing consideration. Submissions must be received by deadline date to be considered for upcoming publication. Space availability will be considered when deciding whether to incorporate an article. Byline of the author submitting article or opinion letter will be published. Submissions without bylines will not be published. Any submissions by a group or a committee must have all the members' names on the piece.

### Content:

Submitted articles can deal with any number of issues either controversial or not. The editor reserves the right to deem an article inappropriate for publication if it is used for personal attacks or complaints. The editor and copy editor reserve the right to edit either the style or length of any submitted article.



# New 'Information Literacy' class at library

- Continued from Page 3 -

scribes to 57 different databases!), how to use the Internet for effective research, including how to find sources on the "invisible Web", how to evaluate sources based on credibility and authority, how to practice ethical behavior in regard to information, in other words, how not to plagiarize, and how to properly cite articles using various citation styles (MLA, APA, Chicago).

Reaction to the class, both from professors whose students have taken IL101 and from the students themselves, has been very positive. When students were asked what they liked most about the class they had this to say:

"The strengths of this class are learning how to use the research databases for scholarly journal articles and Web site evaluation – how to determine a good Web site for research."

"This class was great. Finding articles and sources is easier after this class. The information carries over to other classes."

"It helps you find information quickly and easily and teaches you the correct way to do this."

"This class was very useful. I now know how to get this information quickly and easily."



At home, "Pat" takes a load off.

If you would like more detailed information about the course or have any other questions please contact Libby Knapik, Instructional Services Librarian, at this address:

[knapike@sacredheart.edu](mailto:knapike@sacredheart.edu).

*Libby Knapik (Elizabeth Knapik) has a Bachelor of Science from the Univ. of Michigan, an MLS from the Univ. of Michigan, and an MBA from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Libby has over 20 years experience as a professional librarian. She has also worked both as a librarian in various corporate settings and in the area of marketing and database training for many different database publishers.*

## FREE MONEY!!!

### What is a library?

A house of books?

A provider of information?

A quiet place to study?

Does each individual decide how to use a library for their own purposes? Or have libraries evolved to provide a wide variety of services to meet the needs of a large cross-section of the population?

What do you think a library is? Show us by participating in our library contest. Create a poster depicting what you envision the "library of today" to be.

**First Place - \$100.00**

**Second Place - \$50.00**

**Third Place - \$25.00**



### Rules:

- ◆ Use at least 8.5 X 11, but not bigger than 11 X 17, paper, canvas, board, etc.
- ◆ One or more persons may collaborate on a single poster.
- ◆ Posters may consist of painting, drawing, collages, photographs, or any combination of materials. Content may not contain anything obscene.
- ◆ All submissions become the property of the library; none will be returned to the artist/s.

◆ Submissions must be received in the library no later than Friday, 3/24/06.

◆ The staff of the library newsletter will select the five entries to be considered for final consideration.

◆ The five posters will be displayed in the main level display case from Tuesday, 3/29/06 to Wednesday 4/19/06.

◆ The student body will vote on those five entries to determine the winner, second place and third place by completing ballots located in the library at the Circulation desk. The voting deadline is Friday, 4/21/06.

◆ The winning poster will be framed or mounted and hung in the library.